

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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R 161005Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2308

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4812

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: SENATOR AQUINO

REF: MANILA 4736

1. AT ABOUT SAME TIME SUPREME COURT LISTENING TO AQUINO ATTORNEYS' REQUEST TO WITHDRAW PETITION AGAINST MILITARY TRIBUNAL APR 15, MRS. AQUINO HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH SHE READ TEXT OF AQUINO LETTER REFERRED TO REFTEL. SHE ENDED WITH PLEA THAT PRESIDENT "CONDESCEND" TO TALK WITH HER HUSBAND TO RESOLVE ISSUES SO THAT SENATOR MIGHT END FAST. SENATORS SALONGA AND RODRIGO ANSWERED QUESTIONS OF ASSEMBLED LOCAL AND FOREIGN PRESS, MANY OF WHOM QUESTIONED IN SHARP TERMS SEEMING CONTRADICTION BETWEEN SENATOR'S INCESSANT COURT ACTIONS AND HIS CONDEMNATION OF COURTS. PRESS THEN OBTAINED COMMENT OF PROSECUTOR SISON WHICH NOT UNEXPECTEDLY CRITICAL.

2. IN RATHER FULSOME PRESS COVERAGE APR 16 OF CONFERENCE, PRESS GAVE MOST ATTENTION TO FOUR POINTS LISTED PARA 3, REFTEL AS, IN EFFECT, CONDITIONS. PRESS GAVE LESS PROMINENCE TO REQUEST FOR TALK WITH PRESIDENT ALTHOUGH, ACCORDING OUR PARTICIPATING PRESS REP, THIS WAS CLEARLY MAIN PITCH OF MRS. AQUINO. EVENING EXPRESS, HOWEVER, SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENT COULD NOT SPEAK TO AQUINO WHILE
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MATTER SUB JUDICE.

3. SUPREME COURT EXPECTED RULE SHORTLY ON AQUINO PETITION
ISSUE. SOLICITOR GENERAL REQUESTED SUBMIT HIS BRIEF BY
APR 15, ACCELERATING EARLIER TIME TABLE. OPPOSITION
BRIEF CONSISTS OF AQUINO LETTER.

4. SOLICITOR GENERAL TOLD EMBOFF APR 16 THAT HE UNDERSTOOD
AQUINO TAKING SME SOUP. WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION.

5. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED COPY OF HOMILY PURPORTEDLY
DELIVERED BY ARCHBISHOP DURING MASS FOR SENATOR AT ARCH-
BISHOP'S CAHAPEL ON APR 14. HOMILY EXPRESSES ARCHBISHOP'S
CONVICTION THAT SENATOR "HAS HEARD VOICE OF GOD", COMPARES
AQUINO'S TRIBULATIONS TO CALVARY, AND CONCLUDES THAT
"WHATEVER OUTCOME, LET US PRAY WE WILL HAVE FAITH TO
ACCEPT IT AS WILL OF GOD." COMMENT: WE ASSUME VERSION
ABOVE IS GENUINE, ALTHOUGH MRS. CONCIO TOLD AMBASSADOR
APR 12 THAT MASSES FOR AQUINO HAD BEEN PERMITTED PROVIDED NO
HOMILIES OR MASSES, AND FAMILY HAD NOT APPROACHED ARCH-
BISHOP BECAUSE HE HAD SEEMED UNSYMPATHETIC AT OUTSET OF FAST.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY IS GETTING IMPRESSION OF AQUINO
COUNSELS TANADA AND DIKNO GLEEFULLY PURSUING AQUINO GAME
STRATEGY WHILE AQUINO FAMILY BECOMING INCREASINGLY UPSET
AT AQUINO'S DEATH WISH. SOME MEMBERS OF FAMILY ARE CON-
VINCED DETENTION HAS MENTALLY AFFECTED HIM. IF CONVEICTION
GROWS, WE MAY SEE FAMILY PRESSURES ON HIM AND HIS COUNSEL
TO CALL OFF FAST, OR AT LEAST SLOW IT DOWN. ARCHBISHOP'S
BLESSING OF AQUINO FAST MAY RELIEVE FAMILY'S CONCERN TO
SOME DEGREE BUT PRESUMABLY WILL NOT LESSEN DESIRE TO SEE
AQUINO LIVE.
SULLIVAN

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